



## Coastline picked to help transition seniors and disabled back home

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NEW BEDFORD — Coastline Elderly Services has been picked as one of 33 organizations statewide to participate in the Money Follows the Person program, helping seniors and people with disabilities move out of institutions and back to their communities.

Ana Hayes, director of home care at Coastline, said this will allow Coastline to help as many as 15 people a year to return to their homes from places such as nursing facilities.

"We'll identify someone who meets the criteria, (then) they will work with a transition coordinator who will work with them to provide a plan," Hayes said.

The plan could include help accessing services and housing, Hayes said.

Funding for the program comes from a five-year \$110 million federal grant that began in 2011, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.

In Massachusetts, Money Follows the Person has already helped more than 400 people move out of nursing facilities and other long-term care settings and return to their communities, whether that's to live with a family member or back home.

Seniors age 65 and older and disabled adults can qualify for the program. Participants must also be Medicaid-eligible and have been in a facility for at least 90 days.

Kristin Thorn, the state's Medicaid director, said the program is part of the Affordable Care Act and is consistent with cost-containment measures being implemented at the state level.

"The most important aspect of this is that it's really a performance-based system," Thorn said.

"Over the long term, we anticipate that the care provided in the community will be more efficient and effective, in addition to better quality."

Thorn said organizations that implement the program will be funded in part based on the number of people they help transition back into their communities.